

IN RE: MB 04-233

WMOT, a non-commercial broadcaster, considers itself a strong partner in local activity as well as a provider of local news and public affairs programming, and respectively disagrees with the FCC's proposals to impose further regulation. WMOT, with two full time local reporters and one part time reporter, covers our community's news on a regular basis through both spot news reporting and features focusing on newsmakers of the day. Our public service announcements, focusing on local agencies and programs are regularly scheduled into our daily operations. WMOT also serves as the local provider of the university football and basketball teams. As a non-commercial entity, it's the local community with voluntary contributions that is a critical part of our revenue stream.

Because we emphasize through our hiring practices a fully staffed news operation that routinely contacts community leaders in covering the news, the proposed requirement of an advisory board to consult with these same leaders is redundant. Additionally coordinating four advisory board meetings per year with a small staff would create an unnecessary burden from a time and logistical perspective. If the Advisory board does take effect, we urge the FCC to allow stations to use the internet, station web page, and email system to do an E-meeting instead of direct meetings.

Due to financial constraints, we do rely on automated, non-attended operations for part of our broadcast day, and would literally have to sign off those time periods if the FCC adopts the live operator portion of its proposals. The financial burden of hiring live operators could also curtail any future plans of adding a second HD channel.

Localism is also served by our web site, where WMOT has significant local information concerning community events and concerts.

Public radio, including WMOT, has maintained a significant local presence in news and involving itself in the community. Because of this track record WMOT, and its public radio partners, would best be served with an exemption from the proposed new regulatory burden.

John Egly

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